

Education Bill leaves out national body

by Peter David
The Government had little difficulty last week in shuffling off an opposition attempt to scotch the idea of a national body for higher education into the closing stages of the Education Bill debate.

A Government majority of 64 put paid to a Labour amendment which would have obliged the secretary of state for education and science to set up a national higher education advisory body on the lines recommended by Labour's ill-fated Oakes report of 1978.

But the Labour amendment, introduced by Mr. Nall Kinnock, gave MPs a rare opportunity to discuss the esoteric mysteries of the new "capping the pool" cash limit system introduced by the present Government.

Mr. Kinnock said capping the pool was a crude and blunt mechanism introduced in place of the systematic and fair arrangements for a national body recommended in the Oakes report. "It is not a system of control or coordination. It is a vehicle for cuts and an extremely crude and blunt system of performing those cuts," he said.

The effects of capping the pool, combined with the new fees policy

for overseas students, would deal a mortal blow to courses and whole institutions. "The greatest irony of all in regard to the cuts is that it is the institutions that have been most obedient to previous bouts of public expenditure restraint that will suffer most."

Mr. Christopher Price, MP, chairman of the select committee investigating higher education funding, said scrapping the Oakes recommendations and capping the pool meant that investment in higher education was being decided by Treasury illkitts.

"They do not intend to have consultation about what should be invested in higher education," he said. "Someone will pull out a piece of paper from a bean tub. The means by which the figure is arrived at is shrouded in bureaucratic and is not subject to open government."

Mr. Price said that under the Oakes proposals "a public sector counterweight to the University Grants Committee could have overseen spending, so that colleges know the distribution of resources was carried out by professional people and colleagues."

However, the election saw the

victory of the most neurotic and manic Government for some time and their mania was against quangos, particularly quangos with the wrong names attached to them. A ludicrous decision was therefore taken, without consultation, to chop the quango to size, the distribution of the £375m should go unsupervised," he said.

Dr. Boyson, the under secretary for higher education, said the Government had been forced to cap the pool to prevent financial drift. The Oakes proposals were too bureaucratic, but capping the pool was a "blunt arrangement" for this year.

The DES had set up an advisory committee to consider how to distribute money from the AFE pool in the coming year, before a long-term solution was found to the problem of the public sector. The committee would try to develop "a national course resource estimate" laying down the average costs for different types of courses, he said.

Meanwhile the Government had told local authorities not to start new courses unless they filled a vocational need or provided specific jobs. "These matters should be

considered by the committees of the education authorities, so that the authorities may be aware that the courses are being established."

Turning to the amount of money in the "capped pool", Dr. Boyson said as much would be spent in real terms on home students during 1980-81 as last year.

"I am informed that there has been no cut. That does not mean that in the pattern of distribution no college is worse off. If some colleges are worse off, that must mean that some colleges are better off," he said.

In the long-term, Dr. Boyson said, the Government had not made up its mind on whether to create a national body. "I said that we had no long term plans. We were not committed to setting up a national body and were not against the proposal. The fact that we asked the select committee to consider the matter indicates that we are prepared to listen to the arguments."

He added: "It is not just a question of long-term planning of polytechnics. We also want long-term planning of the whole of higher education in this country so that it can serve the needs of the individual and of this country."

Television courses for jobless considered

An open college providing courses for the unemployed and jobless is being considered by the Independent Broadcasting Authority for transmission on a fourth channel.

The college courses would provide for young people at the Youth Opportunities Unit, Vocational Preparation, programmes as well as the continuing education field.

As yet there are no definite proposals to end the year-long unoccupied air time during the day but the IBA is proposing to investigate the potential market and real needs for such courses at the end of the year.

A kind of organization necessary in connection with the power services, the Commission of the Government.

The main thrust of the proposals for educational programmes, which exclude the University, are to make use of air time available. The IBA, however, is able to offer programmes from its own education series as an independent producer.

Basically the IBA wants to do a kind of educational television more on the lines of such as *Horizon* or *Life on Earth* or other short term series supported by material which can be used in schools or colleges.

The authority believes that it is a very interesting subject to learn far more through such programmes than through more traditional methods and are hoping to start Channel Four's future series in support of such a scheme.

It is currently examining the advantages of setting up a new small secretariat and resources to provide a more effective service and collaboration with outside agencies. In addition this would be supported by a kind of television/radio system which has been successful with the adult literacy programme. On the *Mob*, the channel showed this week how it would be set up.

However, the second reading of the Broadcasting Bill which extends the life of the IBA and the establishment of the new channel showed this week how it would be set up.

William Whitehead, Home Secretary, said that unless the channel could prove quickly that it could provide a service, it would be scrapped.

Surrey takes over institute's courses

by John O'Leary
One of the two colleges left to find alternative validation after withdrawal by London University is the Surrey Institute of Higher Education, which has been taken over by Surrey.

An agreement has been reached in principle for the transfer of courses at the Roehampton Institute of Higher Education with a target date of 1982.

Discussions have been held on the prospect of collaboration in the validation of courses but there is no question of a merger between the two institutions.

Professor Kevin Keohane, rector of Roehampton, said there had been considerable progress on the question of an academic association although the university had not debated the matter formally.

Keohane will submit its complete programme of degree and other courses to the university later this year. Two-thirds of its 2,500 students are on BEd courses, while the rest take a range of degrees and diplomas in the humanities, creative arts and life sciences.

Validating panels, the university will examine all the institute's proposals in detail, regardless of their previous approval by London.

Detailed discussion of the procedures involved will take place in the next few weeks.

Both parties are anxious to make full use of the other's particular areas of expertise. The institute wishes to strengthen its work in the physical sciences, technology and computing studies, while the university is interested in a limited expansion of its involvement in the creative arts.

In a statement this week the two institutions said they shared a common aim of providing opportunities in the education of teachers and other degree courses necessary to match the changes occurring in a society increasingly affected by technological innovation.

The institute was formed in 1975 through the federation of Digby Stuart, Southlands and Whitehalls colleges and the Froebel Institute. London University has validated its courses throughout its existence but has decided to cease external approvals after the 1983 intake.

Keohane said the university will come into effect two years before the withdrawal was to have been carried.



NUS prepares for financial shocks

by Paul Flather
The National Union of Students is preparing for a series of financial shocks which could seriously undermine the activities of the union.

At the top of the list comes a demand from the Customs and Excise Department that the NUS must pay value added tax of 15 per cent on its total subscription income, which stands at more than £100,000 a year.

The union also stands to lose another £30,000 in the next financial year if Dundee University, Reading University and King's College London, confirm recent votes to withdraw from the union. Even worse, all the signs point to more colleges and universities also considering disaffiliation.

The NUS Treasurer, Ms Helen Connor, has also warned that cuts in public expenditure, increasing inflation, and the Government's

intention to change the methods in which students unions are financed, would all aggravate the cash crisis.

"What all these factors mean is that we will undoubtedly have to look carefully at the union's priorities in the future," she said. "The NUS is just not going to have the same amount of money to spend from now on and we will have to decide if we want to continue as at present or reduce our activities and do each one well."

"Our immediate worry is that we may have to pay VAT on our subscription income because of new EEC regulations introduced to the country. But we are contesting the ruling."

She said that the rules allowed for organizations that are directly accountable to their membership to remain exempt. "We are arguing that at least twice a year, at national conference, this is so," she said.

Ms Connor said the trend of disaffiliations was causing great concern. "It affects our finances, but what is worrying us more is that it seems to be organized by an outside political group."

Behind the disaffiliations of the NUS, which now claims a membership of more than a million students, lies a long-running wrangle to introduce a new subscriptions system. Three alternative schemes all failed to achieve the required two-thirds majority at last December's national conference.

Last weekend the NUS held another special conference at the Polytechnic of Central London with representatives from 80 colleges to discuss the subscriptions, but again failed to highlight any particular new scheme. "We will have to try to decide on a new system at our April conference, or the consequences will be very serious," said Ms Connor.

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Lord Todd attacks treatment of dissident Russian scientists

A vehement attack on the Soviet authorities' treatment of dissident Russian scientists was made by Lord Todd, president of the Royal Society, this week.

He was speaking at a meeting of the Royal Society, which was held in London, to mark the 50th anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

Lord Todd said that the Soviet authorities' treatment of dissident Russian scientists was "a disgrace to the Soviet Union and a disgrace to the world."

He said that the Soviet authorities were "treating these scientists as enemies of the state, rather than as people who are trying to do good for their country and for the world."

He said that the Soviet authorities were "denying these scientists the right to work in their own country, and are forcing them to work in exile, where they are often treated as pariahs."

He said that the Soviet authorities were "wasting the talents of these scientists, and are doing a great disservice to the Soviet Union and to the world."

And he urged Russian scientists to "stand up to their Government, and to demand that they be treated as human beings, and not as enemies of the state."

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Adult education paves the way to coping with economic change

The importance of adult education during the next few years in helping people to cope with change, uncertainty, new forms of work and unemployment was stressed this week by Professor Brian Groombridge, director of extra-mural studies at the Open University.

Speaking at a forum organized by the Open University, which was being televised for students, Professor Groombridge criticized the widespread cuts in adult education and emphasized that its abolition would result in little saving because the service is costly for the state.

Referring to the vague terms of the 1944 Education Act regarding the requirement upon local education authorities to provide adult education, Professor Groombridge said that the service needs to be "much less vulnerable in law."

"No government can throw away its money as carelessly as it has done in the past," he said.

country through what could be a very difficult decade," he said.

Praising adult and further education schemes of the past few years like the Open University, the Training Opportunities Programme and the adult literacy campaign, Professor Groombridge suggested that ventures that would be relevant to a changing society, such as courses on energy and the expansion of new computer programmes for women and university-based courses for the elderly.

"I think we need techniques of that kind to help fill the educational vacuum that I detect at the heart of the democratic process," he said.

But he emphasized that the service should not be "only for the government foodlog." Adult education is far too important to be left to government funding. It needs the injection of public and private money for public purposes.

The talk, given by Professor Groombridge, and televised by the Open University, will be transmitted tomorrow on BBC 2 at 10.10 am.

New face for OU

The new general secretary of the Open University Students' Association, which represents more than 20,000 students, has just taken his post. Mr. Bill Brand, who replaces the first general secretary, Mr. Rex O'Hare, was formerly a student at the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok. As general secretary he heads an administrative staff of 15 which will advise the executive committee.

Scottish education colleges fear worst

Fears for the fate of Scotland's 10 education colleges, particularly the smaller ones, remain unrelaxed but unrelaxed after Education Secretary Mr. Alex Fletcher's meeting with three Scottish Labour MPs on Monday.

Mr. Fletcher, who was told by Mr. David Gifford, Mr. Martin O'Neill and Mr. Douglas Cunningham that regional factors were as important as national ones in deciding the colleges' future, said he intended to set up a committee to study the colleges' future.

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Art college lecturers stage half-day strike on cuts

Lecturers at West Surrey College of Art and Design have staged a half-day strike in protest at Surrey County Council's threat to cut the college's teaching force by up to 21 full-time posts.

The college has an establishment of 106 full-time posts but the teaching force is much higher.

The strike was declared official by the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education and the National Society for Art Education.

The county council has said that it is "compulsory" to reduce the teaching force in the next financial year.

but talks will continue on salary reductions and retrenching measures.

Union leaders regard the proposals as particularly important. They see it as the first time an education authority has sought to use the "deliberate" means for student staff ratios as a way to secure shedding of jobs.

Surrey wants to bring the existing ratio, which is between 5.5:1 and 6:1, more closely in line with the "deliberate" norm of 7.5:1.

Surrey has said these are not guidelines but recommendations, and that they will be applied in one college, said Mr. Bill Brand, NATFHE's Surrey secretary.

Originally, there was to be an immediate cut of 21 posts, but the college principal objected that this would have disastrous effects. To avoid too heavy a blow, a reduction of 14 posts was then proposed as a first step.

Surrey's senior assistant education officer, for further education, Mr. Michael Watts, said discussions were still going on.

"What the college is going for is still not up to the mark," he said. "The college is still not up to the mark, but it is a matter of time before it will be."

He said the college would still have the ratio below 7.5:1, he said.

Ealing college staff vote on strike call

Lecturers at Ealing College of Higher Education were voting this week on a recommendation to stage a one-day strike in protest at educational cuts in the borough.

Seven redundancies were declared at the college last term as the result of the closure of a photography course at the end of this academic year. And now £250,000 is to be pruned from the college's budget in a 5 per cent cut imposed by the local authority.

Councillors have been arguing over the scale of the latest cuts for several months, the initial recommendation having been overturned by a subcommittee, but later reinstated by the full education committee. The council is expected to ratify the original plans at its meeting next month.

A well-attended meeting of the college branch of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education voted overwhelmingly to support a strike on the day of the council meeting and join the National Union of Teachers and other unions to a picket.

A majority of the membership has to support the move for the action to go ahead.

Union officials said discontent had been building up since the original declaration of redundancies.

among the photography staff last October. Notices were rescheduled when it was pointed out that the council had a policy of no redundancies but were rescheduled the following month after the policy had been reversed.

There has since been a row over the period of notice, NATFHE insisting that the authority should abide by a national agreement between the union and the Council of Local Education Authorities. NATFHE says the authority has claimed not to be bound by the agreement and will make the staff redundant on August 31 as planned.

Pioneering director of the college, Mr. Neil Merritt, director of the college, will cut 430 hours from timetables but will not result in further redundancies among full-time staff.

Mr. Merritt agreed that any new cuts would be difficult to determine without loss of jobs but said the present savings were possible through the reduction of teaching hours and less use of part-time staff.

Lecturers may lose their pay

Academic staff at Middlesex Polytechnic who did not give lectures and seminars because of industrial action by the National and Local Government Officers' Association last term, may now have their pay docked.

The deputy director of the Polytechnic, Dr. Michael Edwards, said the staff concerned have been sent letters informing them that they would lose some pay for normal teaching duties which were not fulfilled.

"Staff are under an obligation to do their job," he added. "If they decide to go on strike, they are not to be paid for the time they are not working. But they are under an obligation to do their job, and if they do not, they will lose their pay."

we know the details of what teaching was lost."

About 10 staff members of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education, said to be involved. Mr. Jeff Brass, NATFHE full-time regional officer, said: "No pay has yet been deducted and the whole matter is still under discussion."

According to Mr. Roger Harris, acting chairman of the NATFHE branch at the polytechnic, all the staff involved have been redeployed and completed the teaching interrupted by the NGAO strikes, except in a very few cases such as laboratory work, which was not possible.

He said the letters had unopposedly gone through staff and management at the college.

Keele plans to raise overseas intake

Keele University is to attempt to increase its numbers of overseas students to boost its income.

It plans to take more overseas students, mainly Americans, on one-year studentships, and a new range of courses will be offered at half-monthly intervals.

Traditionally, Keele has only had a small number of overseas students, but the intention is to increase the number to 300 by the end of the next year.

The students will be charged the minimum recommended fees. Staff will have to increase their current teaching load. A spokesman said: "We have always been a bit low on overseas students but in view of the current situation we are going to have a drive to recruit more."

The Standing Conference of University Information Officers will discuss the question of how best the universities can set out to recruit more overseas students, at its meeting next month.

The OU machine that failed to pass

by Charlotte Barry
Teething troubles with a new, sensitive marking system adopted by the Open University have led to more than 200 students on an arts foundation course being failed by mistake.

The error affecting 210 borderline students came to light only recently, some weeks after letters were sent out informing them they had failed course A101 in 1979.

After members of the arts faculty examination board discovered that more students had failed this popular course than in previous years, an intensive investigation revealed that over-stringent criteria had been adopted.

Now the Open University dean of

arts, Professor Arthur Marwick, has written to the students involved telling them that they have passed the course after all.

This letter explains that last year a more sensitive marking scheme was adopted which in general has worked well in producing a wider spread of marks and more distinctions at the top of the scale.

"The problem arose over the borderline pass/fail students," the letter says. "The intention of the examination board was to adopt the same criteria as in previous years to decide whether a student passed or failed. However, inadvertently, more stringent criteria had been adopted."

"We do apologize for the obvious upset you have experienced by

being wrongly informed of your results."

Because the 210 students have been awarded passes after all, they are now being given the chance to change the courses allocated to them for the 1980 academic session which began in January. Being awarded a pass in the first place may have prevented some of them from taking up certain post-foundation arts courses.

The university said the problem had been caused by a very complicated marking system which involves assessment both by exam and assignments marked by both computer and tutor. "Now we know the complications of the system we will be able to work within its sensitivities."



Natalie Garcia-Lon, left, a second-year student at Middlesex Polytechnic, Little-Rosewood, and Babs Chin are textile students who won awards in a competition sponsored by Lister-Lee Yarns, the International Wool Secretariat, and Woman magazine.

More in-job training urged by TUC

A massive in-service education programme is necessary to provide better mother-tongue teaching, more science and modern languages and more qualified careers teachers, the TUC warned the Secretary of State for Education today.

Writing to Mr. Mark Carlisle in response to the Department of Education's consultative document *A Framework for the School Curriculum*, the TUC argues that it is hardly useful to talk of establishing priorities and redefining responsibilities when Government economic policies are impoverishing the education service.

"When in-service education is being cut back teaching jobs are being lost and capitation allowances drastically reduced, it will be difficult for a demoralized teaching force to undertake the kind of curriculum review the consultative exercise implies," the TUC says.

The TUC believes that once consensus has been reached on what should be included in the curriculum the Government should undertake to protect essential curricular areas.

"This means a commitment to fill long vacancies in the curriculum subject areas, expand in-service education opportunities in these areas and maintain and expand capitation allowances, equipment and other facilities in the core of the protected curriculum," the TUC points out.

Huddersfield poly given reply deadline

Huddersfield Polytechnic has been given six weeks to answer more than 40 questions from Kirklees council on alleged mismanagement of its financial and other affairs.

The council's finance committee this week put the finishing touches to the list of questions which the polytechnic is expected to answer within two weeks of the council's next meeting on March 12.

The questions are apparently designed to identify who was responsible for authorizing lines of action which led to criticism in the audit report.

Links between representatives of the council and the polytechnic governors founded on Kirklees' insistence that the rector, Mr. Ken Durran, should not take part. Council sources say the question was the jurisdiction of the council over the polytechnic.

The council is over a year to face meeting, there is no complete block on work which must be done.

The Conservative leader of the council, Councillor Tom Cliffe, rejected allegations by the chairman of the polytechnic governors, Mrs. Jean Carter, that the meeting which broke down over Mr. Durran's presence degenerated into a shambles.

THEE AND ME

60 years in the future: the sun has burnt through the ozone layer round the earth.

Cast: Kay Adamshead, Gillian Barge, Ian Hogg, Mary Maddox, Leonard Maguire, Billy McColl, George Sweeney, Don Warrington.

Director Michael Rudman, Designer Sue Plummer, Costumes Lindy Hemmings, Lighting Gerry Jenkinson.

LYTTLETON: Previews February 21, 22, 23 (all at 7.45), 23 (3.00 & 7.45) and Opening February 26 (7). Tickets £1.80 to £3.30.

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Faculty votes to strike

by our North American editor

WASHINGTON
The faculty association at the University of Windsor in Ontario has voted overwhelmingly to go on strike from March 3. If the dispute is not settled before then, it will be the first official academic strike ever held in English-speaking Canada.

According to the Canadian Association of University Teachers, the main issue is the demand on the university administration to replace the existing collective agreement with substituting new articles on financial exigency and redundancy.

The administration would then be able to declare a financial exigency and sack anyone in the university after informing the faculty association, the CAUT claims. The present collective bargaining agreement, negotiated three years ago, has no article requiring the administration to demonstrate that a

financial exigency is genuine, then providing "orderly and logical methods for deciding" them.

The university has not made an official statement in response to the union's charges. However, public relations director Elizabeth Hallack said the administration did not believe they were endangering academic freedom or tenure in any way. They were just seeking a w

to redefining snail as student numbers fell. Enrolment at Windsor has dropped from a peak of 7,400 in 1976-77 to 6,110 this year, and demographic reasons the university forecasts a long-term decrease of 4,900 students over the next years.

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the decline has been unevenly across the universe, Mr. Havelock said. The liberal arts and social sciences have suffered particularly badly, while professional studies have thrived.

negotiations with the administration under the auspices of a government mediator. The union negotiators are backed by a 377 to 50 strike vote by the association.

CAUT executive secretary Don Savage said the association would

pay strikers \$50 a week plus \$1 for each dependant. "We now have a \$600,000 strike fund so we can go on supporting them for quite a long time", he said.

Dr Savage said that, while the control issue in the dispute was the university's alleged determination

destroy the tenure system at Windsor, faculty members were also upbraided by the administration's refusal to make them any salary offer, even though negotiations started in summer. However, Ms Herdwick replied that it has normal in Canadian labour negotiations not to discuss

**Electronics boost
for Stanford**

Staford University is to set up a \$16m electronics research centre, to provide the technology and skilled manpower to meet and build up large-scale integrated (VLSI) systems—the basis of the giant computers of the future.

Systems; or it will be known, it will be the only one of its size in the country, said Stanford engineering dean William Kays. "Making the leap into YLSI systems calls for unprecedented integration of physics, materials science, electrical

In addition to performing advanced research, the center is expected to train 100 masters and thirty PhD graduates a year.

Clive Cookson,
North American Editor,
The Times Higher Education

Supplement,
National Press Building,
Room 541,
Washington, DC 20045,
Telephone: (202) 638 6765.

Overseas News

Centre move to block draft autonomy law

from Harry Deheli

MADRID Members of the ruling Centre Democratic Union party may be the first to try to throw out government-sponsored legislation on the regulation of university affairs, in a turn-around prompted by pressure from Spain's Roman Catholic hierarchy.

The draft "law on university autonomy", or LAU, aroused tremendous controversy last month when Spanish MPs had their first look at it, before discussion was even scheduled in parliament. The parties of the left organized a week of student strikes and demonstrations in an apparent effort to force the government into withdrawing it before it came up for debate.

That intransigence, involving a few violent incidents, did not keep the proposal out of parliament. Yet a communiqué issued early in February by the episcopal subcommittee on education may turn out to be more effective than all the shouting in the streets—and the bishops' support not even on the side of the monarchs.

There are two key proposed laws dealing with schools and universities under consideration by the education committee of the congress of deputies, or lower house, one on

elementary education and the other on higher education.

In the case of both draft laws, the arguments, pro and con, have had at least as much to do with the Spaniards' historic love/hate relationship with a church which frequently descends into the political arena as they have with pedagogical systems.

The battle has been fought largely on ideological terrain, with the result that the battle lines are distorted. The left, for example, has complained much more about the relatively progressive proposal on university reform than about the frankly conservative proposal on lower education.

The clergyman have lined up alongside the Socialists and Communists and their other strange bedfellows, certain members of the teaching staff who fear to lose either a source of income or a source of power. What the bishops dislike about the proposal for university reform is article 13, which would make it necessary for Parliament to grant approval for the creation of a new university, or higher learning establishment, by either the state or the autonomous regions. The proposal, which clearly states that the state, and which clearly states that the autonomous regions will not imply the concession of financial support at the expense of the State budget.



Students demonstrate to force the government to scrap proposed laws regulating universities.

A communiqué from the Church hierarchy said: "We believe it is an undeniable duty of social groups to create universities and other centres of higher learning with support for such institutions and their students on equal terms and with no discrimination whatever."

The communiqué also demands that every qualified citizen should be guaranteed the right to attend the university of his choice, a demand which the bishops' oppo-

nents assume to imply state subsidies so that tuition fees would be equal in public and private institutions. The position of the church is similar to that which it has adopted with regard to elementary education, where it insists on the continuation of subsidies for schools run by the Church without any strings attached, advancing the argument that parents who seek a Catholic education for their child-

ren should not be penalised by having to pay more in order to exercise their right of conscience. Congressional deputies of the major parliamentary opposition party, the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, object to such subsidies, their principal stated objection being that the proposal to renege on the country's universities is the reform which it offers is as profound enough.

Italy passes university reform Act

from Uli Schmetzer

ROME The Italian government this month took the first step towards a long overdue university reform by classifying the country's academic staff into three main categories.

The new law, passed in more than 1,000 votes, after 72 hours of debate in the Italian parliament, classifies the country's academic staff into three main categories: full-time professors, part-time professors, and research assistants.

For the first time, the law will have to sit for some time before it can be put into effect. It will have to be approved by both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies.

One of the law's most positive aspects is the granting of tenure to about 12,000 part-time professors, who have taught for decades on annual contracts and scholarships, without social benefits and pensions. Their strikes provided

the initiative for the legislation. The President must now have their teaching experience before they can sit for a state examination that will elevate them to tenure as "researchers".

In an effort to weed out unsuitable staff and give a chance to the constant wave of young academic aspirants, the law will require that all research assistants will be re-examined after three years. Those who fail will be relegated to administrative jobs while successful candidates can sit for examinations to enter the category of assistant professors. Parliament turned down a clause under which researchers unable to reach a higher category would have received a "golden handshake" to leave the campus.

However, the new law, drafted by the government, will exempt professors and 15,000 by assistant professors and 16,000 by researchers.

members of parliament) and university chairs.

The law did, however, specify that such part-time professors be paid a salary 40 per cent less than their full-time colleagues. At the same time they may be placed on a waiting list if their public jobs do not allow them to teach a minimum amount of hours.

On the other hand, the new law incorporates some innovations. It defines the task of researchers as mainly a "tutor who helps students with advice and disquisitions" to assist their learning. It will bring for the first time the judicial system to Italy.

Finally, the legislation envisages a national academic staff of 46,000 by the end of the century, compared to 36,000 today. Of these 15,000 posts will be held by ordinary professors, 15,000 by assistant professors and 16,000 by researchers.

New institute gives a boost to contemporary history study

from Guy Neave

PARIS A new boost to the field of contemporary history is to be given with the setting up of an Institute for the Study of Contemporary History which will centre on the post-1939 period.

Set up under the auspices of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, the new body is to start work in January, 1981.

Over the past few years, interest in contemporary history in France has grown considerably, the institute's director, and head of the committee for the study of the war, one of the tasks to be assumed by the new institute, will be to bring social forecasting and history closer together. This, Mr. Badier claims, will be of considerable help to those involved

in decision-making in government and in the private sector.

The call for greater attention to be paid to this field is of course not new. More than 20 years ago, Professor René Remond, at present director of research at the National Foundation of Political Science, suggested that more interest be shown in this relatively neglected sector.

Among the first areas to be investigated by the new Institute will be economic policy and policy-making over the last 40 years. The history of social sciences since 1945, the director, and head of the committee for the study of the war, one of the tasks to be assumed by the new institute, will be to bring social forecasting and history closer together. This, Mr. Badier claims, will be of considerable help to those involved

Academics join Irish TUC

from John Walsh

DUBLIN Over 1,000 academic and college lecturers have joined the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, the equivalent of the British TUC.

The joining to the Irish Federation of University Teachers, which was set up in 1976, marks a professional body that has decided some years ago to become a full trade union.

The move represents increasing unionisation of Irish academics and reflects their growing concern about pay and conditions.

The federation was involved in backing the legal action against the trustees of St Patrick's College, Maynooth, over the dismissal of two priests from the staff. Recently it took University College Dublin to the Labour court over a pensions deal for women and proved that it was discriminatory.

Its main work is in pursuing pay claims, and ensuring that increases granted in the public sector are implemented as soon as possible in the colleges. It has also issued statements and reports on the need for expansion of the higher education sector in the Republic.

The federation represents academics and library staffs in the five university colleges and in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. In the past few months the Association of Professional Staffs in Colleges of Education has amalgamated with the federation.

The congress has about 95 unions affiliated, representing over 600,000 workers, North and South. Joining congress will entitle the federation to nominate delegates to this year's annual conference of congress unions when it meets in Belfast in July.

Moscow universities in anniversary celebrations

from Michael Binyon

MOSCOW Two well-known universities in Moscow are celebrating anniversaries. Moscow State University, the most prestigious academic institution in the Soviet Union, has just marked its 225th anniversary and Lomonosov University, which draws most of its students from the Third World, was founded 20 years ago this month.

Moscow University, officially named in honour of its founder, the Russian scientist and poet Mikhail Lomonosov, was presented with the Order of the October Revolution at a celebration meeting to mark the occasion.

At its foundation the university had only 30 students, now there are over 30,000. The university has 17 departments, about 600 chairs and laboratories, four research institutes, a computing centre and an observatory.

The Soviet students come from all parts of the country, from 70 different national and ethnic groups. Over 150,000 students and postgraduates, some 150,000 from 100 countries, including most countries in the West.

Lomonosov University has only 6,000 students from 105 countries.

but does not include any students from the West. It was founded by government decree in 1960 to train specialists in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Professor Vladimir Stanis, the rector, said the establishment of the university, named after the first prime minister of the Congo (now Zaïre), "was a graphic expression of the Soviet people's internationalist solidarity with the people of the countries which have gained freedom from colonial dependence."

This year Lomonosov will graduate about 500 students. In the past 20 years it has turned out 9,000 graduates, who the rector said in an interview, "are doing respect for each other, for their culture, for their customs and for the people of the world with others on the basis of equality and comradeship, mutual assistance."

Competition to get into Lomonosov is fierce, and preference is given to students from poor backgrounds. There have been suggestions that the university, on the outskirts of Moscow, is a training ground for the KGB, accusations hotly denied by the rector.

About one-third of the students are Soviet citizens hoping to work in developing countries. The university programmes are largely tailored to meet the economic needs of the countries from which it draws students.

Low entrance standards worry republic

from Günther Kloss

The universities in the federal republic are becoming worried about a lack of breadth and depth of knowledge of their first-year students.

As the chairman of the West German Rectors' Conference (Vizekanzlerkonferenz) explained after the committee's last plenary meeting, "it is not that they lack intelligence but that they lack the necessary intellectual background."

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No news is bad news for university budgets

The last eight years have seen the sudden destruction, the painful and only partial rebuilding, and the equally sudden but perhaps more final destruction of the traditional system of university finance.

In 1972-73 universities were at the beginning of a new quinquennial cycle in theory would guarantee them a modest increase in income over the next five years. This winter they still do not know exactly how much money they will receive in the present year, 1979-80, but suspect it will represent a substantial decline.

The story has three parts. First come the sudden collapse of the quinquennial system in the crisis of

1973-74 when the miners' strike led to the fall of Mr Heath's government, the return of Labour, the rise in inflation, and the arrival of the IMF.

Second came the gradual recovery that started in 1975 and continued until last May. Universities were granted a shadowy "trinquennial" which, however, compromised by the new institution of cash limits, gave back some kind of planning horizon, and an element of (very modest) growth was restored to them.

Third came the new cuts imposed by the Conservative Government last June (which in themselves are actually much less severe than is supposed). These cuts, however, have been compounded by the

Government's new policy on overseas students' fees, which puts at risk up to £100m of the universities' income, and the new rise of inflation.

An analysis of public expenditure on education confirms the first two parts of this story. In 1970-71 over 13 per cent of all education spending was on universities. It slumped to only 10.6 per cent in 1975-76 and recovered in 1977-78 to 11.2 per cent.

The third part is not yet known with such exactitude but an impression of its shape is given in the answer to the THES survey. What is certain is that universities today are in a much weaker condition than they were in 1973 to withstand the renewed blows of austerity.

Financial conclusions

Universities are still uncertain about how much they have lost in the tangle of cuts imposed since the present Government came to power last month ago, although they expect it to be a great deal. But they are certain that they have lost their much-cherished "planning horizon". This is the broad conclusion of a survey of the financial condition of the universities carried out by THES in mid-January.

A short questionnaire was sent to every university. Nineteen filled it in completely, four more partially, and 13 refused on the grounds that information was simply not available and that their answers would be ambiguous.

The main findings are:

1. The real income of universities has declined by between 3 and 10 per cent.

2. They face deficits of up to £13m. The average deficit will be between £250,000 and £500,000.

3. Fees have declined almost to nothing as a result of previous rounds of cuts.

4. Endowment income is much less than it once was. Even Oxford, which only receives £3m (or 10 per cent of its income) from non-public sources.

5. No university has yet considered the question of making academic staff redundant formally—but it is in the minds of several vice-chancellors.

6. Most universities are determined that their present staff/student ratios should be maintained even if this leads to a decline in the number of home students.

7. The number of overseas students is generally expected to be cut in half by the recent fee increases—although there is one dissenting opinion among the vice-chancellors.

Uncertainty is the main complaint, by vice-chancellors. They see it as more dangerous than the cuts themselves. Sir Rex Richards, the chancellor of Oxford University, comments: "Universities would not be able to give good value for money if they are not prepared to allocate to them if they could have information about their funding, further than merely a few months."

However, vice-chancellors are less agreed about the seriousness of the actual cuts. Professor John Wood of Bradford writes: "It is easy to be pessimistic, and dependent about the effects on the universities of cuts and I think we are particularly well-placed to do so, but any European university."

A third vice-chancellor of a technological university sees the future differently. Dr. Ralph Franklin of the City University sums up his view of the financial prospects for the universities as a single word: "rocky".

Two heads of institutions, Lord Flowers, rector of Imperial College, and Professor Sir John Gorton, director of the LSE, feel that the present financial position is so dire that radical rethinking is required.

Sir Alec Morrison, Bristol's vice-chancellor and chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, sums up the overall position in these terms: "The financial condition of universities is a matter of grave concern, because of three factors: (a) falling real income; (b) rising costs; and (c) the need to maintain standards."

The vice-chancellors' committee has once more urged the authorities of established universities to consider the possibility of a merger, although Sir Gorton is most unlikely to be introduced into the German system.

Survey shows planning is yet another lost horizon

1. How large an increase in income would your university have needed in 1979-80 to cope with existing commitments (i.e. incremental drift in salaries, built up of student numbers and so on).

2. What was the increase or decrease in income according to your calculations?

The answers to these two questions give some idea of the gap between commitments and resources which universities must try to bridge. Most universities needed a modest increase of between 1 and 2 per cent in income (in real terms) just to stand still. In fact they had to accept a reduction of between 3 and 10 per cent—leaving a gap of between 4 and 12 per cent to be bridged somehow.

A typical example is the University College of Wales at Aberystwyth. Dr. Gareth Owen, the principal, says that the college would have needed an increase, in money terms, of 15.9 per cent merely to cope with existing commitments in 1979-80, but received only 10 per cent more.

Similarly Imperial College needed 24 per cent and received 18.4 per cent. Bradford could have got by with a zero increase "because that would have appeared generous by the standards of the past three to four years", but had to accept a real cut of between 3.5 and 4.5 per cent.

Sussex needed 18.2 per cent more in cash terms but received less than 13 per cent more. Glasgow needed a 3 per cent increase in income in real terms but has to face a 3 per cent cut which is likely to grow to 4 per cent as a result of incremental drift. St. Andrews required a similar increase to balance its books "by continuing to exercise strict control over expenditure".

According to the vice-principal, Dr. F. D. Gunstone, but has a 3 per cent cut.

The gap between commitments and resources is fairly low at Loughborough, about 2.5 per cent, but double that at Bristol. Five per cent, in fact, seems to be a typical figure. But even this dismal figure is based on the assumption that universities will receive full compensation of current wage increases.

Does your university expect to have a deficit at the end of the present academic year, and if so, how large will it be?

One university, Glasgow, was budgeting last November for a deficit of £1.7m but the increase in cash limits has now eased the position. Nevertheless one university is still expecting a deficit of £1.3m at the end of the year and most are anticipating deficits of between £250,000 and £500,000. Only a few expect to be able to balance their books.

Among the fortuitous, later are Brunel ("We always try to live within our income"). Bristol will get by by freezing most job vacancies, and Cranfield, which being a direct grant institution is in a different position.

Other universities anticipate for

mild deficits: Imperial—£936,000 (more than £1m actual deficit); Strathclyde—£800,000; LSE—£500,000; Swansea—£400,000; Bradford—£250,000 to £500,000 (already seven chairs out of 49 are frozen and 22 other teaching posts); Sussex—£370,000; City—£250,000; Durham—up to £200,000; UWIST—£150,000.

Some universities do not give a precise figure but still expect deficits. Loughborough and St. Andrews expect these to be fairly small, but Dr. Gunstone of St. Andrews adds significantly: "It is the position in later years that is more worrying."

(4) What reserves, if any, has your university been able to accumulate?

Although this question was open in different interpretations, most of the answers show that what few universities once had it had long since been burnt off in earlier bouts of austerity.

Brunel's blunt answer is "none", and Strathclyde was already in deficit last year. Several other universities indicate that their reserves are insignificant. Aberystwyth, for example, only has £58,500 (although

it also possesses an accumulated surplus of £154,000).

Even reserves that appear large in cash terms are very small compared to the rate at which the university spends its income. Oxford's generous sounding £1.2m is less than 3 per cent of the university's turnover, and Bristol's £800,000 only 3 per cent of the university's expenditure.

Sussex only has £80,000 unallocated (compared with £335,000 that is already earmarked). Imperial has accumulated £750,000 committed to maintenance costs and minor capital work, £350,000 committed to plant renewal (including a new telephone exchange), and £400,000 in departmental funds frozen to underwrite this year's deficit.

LSE has about £500,000, City £528,000, Durham £300,000 (about 2.5 per cent of annual expenditure), and St. Andrews £127,000. Glasgow only has £74,000 in uncommitted funds at the end of the last academic year.

Professor West at Bradford, for very good reasons, is uncommunicative. "We are a little vague about specifying reserves because, in the present severe economic climate, it is quite conceivable that Government may take into account one's declared reserves in determining future income; therefore, no comment."

(5) What income other than from the UGC, research councils, and other public bodies does your university enjoy?

The answer to this question, despite the widespread idea, even in universities that universities are now considerably private wealth. The newer universities, in particular, have a more significant income from central and local government.

Brunel, for example, has "negligible" other income, Loughborough "none of significance", Bristol "no endowment income", and Strathclyde's private income comes

to less than 2 per cent of the total. City is the only university where the private income has significant private income (£228,000), although this disparity may be explained by whether income from industrial contracts is counted or not.

Other universities enjoy small amounts of endowment income. In the case of St. Andrews and the LSE this comes to £41,000 and £37,000 respectively. Further up the scale come Durham with £150,000 (but still only 1 per cent of expenditure), Sussex and Imperial with the same sum, Glasgow with £367,000, and Bristol with £400,000.

In addition to endowment income most universities earn money from contracts with private industry. In the case of Bristol this comes to £1m, and of Imperial College to £2.15m.

But the only university that replied which has a significant private income is Oxford. But even this £3m only amounts to 10 per cent of income excluding research grants and contracts and half of it in any case is earmarked.

(6) In what stage would your university contemplate making academic cuts?

Nearly all universities agree that this would be a last resort, would be expensive in the short term, and would almost certainly have to be the result of national initiative rather than the policy of an individual institution.

Professor Dehendorf states firmly: "It is our declared policy not to make anyone redundant on account of savings." Maintaining the position of staff in post is our top priority," Dr. Franklin at City declares that it would only be considered if the university could not meet its commitments. Dr. Owen at Aberystwyth writes: "We prefer to think of it as a last resort when all else fails and bank credit is withdrawn."

Several universities point out that redundancies would be costly. Dr. Gunstone says that "substantial additional funds would be required to finance a programme of redundancies." UWIST points out that the scale of compensation would make redundancy a non-starter in cost flow reasons, but adds "1982-83 looks like the crunch".

Some vice-chancellors are more prepared at least to think the unthinkable. Sir Denis Wilkinson at Sussex says that if cuts continue and if there is a 50 per cent drop in the number of overseas students, "redundancies will be inevitable before 1984". Imperial College says it would look to the introduction of a "modest scheme".

Professor Philip Reynolds at Lancaster points out that although redundancies are not being contemplated the university will need to do so by 1985 or 1986, which is more than the average departure rate in the last three years.

Sir Alec Morrison writes: "Our policy is to freeze all vacant posts which are out essential and to cut our expenditure if this policy becomes insufficient to maintain our expenditure to our income we should have to consider making staff redundant."

7. Is it the policy of your university to try to reduce the number of home students in line with any reduction in real income?

Most vice-chancellors are determined that academic standards should be protected but talk of saying that student numbers should be tied mechanically to income. Sir Rex Richards' reply is typical: "We are determined that academic standards should not fall, and that if as a result of a re-

duction in our income the number of students declines then unless student numbers decline also those standards will immediately come under very heavy pressure."

Dr. Horry Kay of Exeter agrees: "Broadly, yes. We would seek to maintain the quality of resources. Professor Fred Atkinson at Durham also replies: "Possibly and regretfully, yes." He points out that Durham made all reasonable economies in earlier rounds of cuts.

But there were also more hawish and more dovish vice-chancellors on this question. Dr. Williams of Glasgow says that the university still hopes substantially to meet local demand. Sir Samuel Curran at Strathclyde maintains that a balance has to be struck although if there is a significant decrease in income a decrease in the number of home students is inevitable. City, St. Andrews and Keele are planning to keep numbers constant, and the LSE and UWIST answer "no".

Professor West sums up the true problem. It was not Bradford's policy to link home student numbers with real income on a unit of resource basis. But beyond a certain point the economies forced on them could be drastic and would entail the closing of certain areas with obvious consequences for home students.

On the other side some universities, are determined to maintain the present unit of resource, no matter what the consequences. Loughborough, plans to keep its present staff/student ratio of 1:10.2 constant. Imperial, Bristol, and Brunel also plan to defend the present unit of resource.

(8) How many overseas students do you expect to be able to recruit when the new tuition fees are fully in force?

The CVCP "party line" is clearly that the number of overseas students will be cut in half by the fees increase—although there are one or two interesting deviations. Bristol, Loughborough, Cranfield, Aberystwyth, and Brunel, agree that a 50 per cent reduction is most probable. Bradford expects a cut of between 40 per cent and 60 per cent but hopes to make every effort to attract the best possible postgraduate research numbers.

Two universities expect the reduction to be even sharper. UWIST forecasts that it will have only 170 overseas students by 1982-83 compared to 465 today and Glasgow with 680 expects to have 170-200 in four or five years' time.

More universities expect cuts of less than half. Oxford is working on the hypothesis that it will lose 20 per cent of its 1,488 overseas students. Lancaster is anticipating a reduction of 30 to 40 per cent in its present total of 278. City expects to attract 390 overseas students compared to its present 563.

The two deviants are Durham and Cambridge. Professor Holliday hopes to recruit up to the present total of 225 at Durham and adds that it may be in the interest of the university to increase the proportion of overseas students from 5 to 8 per cent of the total.

Sir Peter Swinerton-Dyer at Cambridge is an agnostist. He points out that on every previous occasion when fees have been raised vice-chancellors have predicted a drop in numbers and on every occasion have been spectacularly wrong.

He continues: "If they get right this time, I expect the Government will at the last moment do enough to stave off financial disaster. What worries me more as much is that, once again, the predictions are wrong, and we shall thereby lose such talented students of credibility as we retain in Whitehall."

Sri Lankan minister intervenes

from D. B. Uddegama

COLOMBO Sri Lanka's education minister has appointed officials to take over the running of the University of Moratuwa after a period of closure following a row involving the minister, the university administration and the students.

McMinnick Wijeratne thought the university administration over-reacted to a student strike which led to a hunger strike and a rooftop protest.

The minister told the Sri Lankan parliament that any future con-

frontation it would be the duty of the Government to amend the University Act.

No spoke of the "arrogance of ignorance" of those in authority in the country's universities, saying that autonomy should not be interpreted as "the freedom of the wild ass".

The Moratuwa incident led to the resignation of the university's vice-chancellor, Professor U. Kumara.

The Minister saw two different sides to the students' strike and suspended one set for three months and cautioned the others.

Charles Hannam, Pat Smyth and Norman Stephenson defend university teacher training courses

A knife at the throat fails to improve a lecturers' lot

Postgraduate and initial teacher training courses have been going on so long in university departments of education that those of us who teach them and in part make our living from them could be in danger of assuming that they were effective and would continue for ever.

However, in recent years there has been much criticism—from students who doubted that we were training them effectively, from schools who claimed that we were out of touch with reality, from within universities themselves from those who doubt that teacher preparation is a proper activity for a university.

Added to all this there is the falling birthrate which has led in purging of the colleges of education which may be likened to the dissolution of the monasteries in the numbers of highly qualified staff thrown on to the streets. The polytechnics have taken over the colleges that remain, running PGCE courses at smaller costs and now we are told falling numbers are likely to threaten university departments themselves.

Such beatings about the head, while they may give satisfaction to some, tend to leave us and our colleagues anxious and demoralized. Anxiety is not always a spur to better work—indeed it may well seize the opportunity to urge more malleable staff fearful of their future and their promotion to take on more or different tasks but this is no guarantee that the quality of what is done will be improved.

Our position is no worse of course than that of teachers in industry or wherever redundancy threatens. One thing is certain though, shouting at PGCE lecturers because there is not enough "research" or reading or lecturing or writing does not produce these things any more than a painter will paint a better picture because his patron has a knife at his throat.

The new situation though does give us an opportunity to justify our work and to clarify the particular contribution university departments make to the initial training of teachers. We have escaped the purges so far, whether through merit or privilege is doubtful. At a time when there is a close commitment to an all-graduate education, the universities have a role to play in the public image of teaching. Certainly our graduate students have been through an arduous and professional selection process. A level competitive university entrance, the university course itself, final examinations—these things are virtually assured.

At Bristol, for instance, we have largely given up interviewing candidates for the course. We are spending as much time interviewing as teaching. When we monitored the performance during the year of interview and interviewed students, we could find no significant difference. This is not to say that we are necessarily selecting the better teachers—we have carefully avoided looking too closely at that.

It is as difficult to predict or evaluate the effectiveness of courses like ours in terms of professional development as it is any other profession.

We know that ambitious doctors, business experts are all theoreticians that their preparatory courses guarantee high professional standards. However, they are sure of the value of being trained in a university and it is in their concern that while doctors and architects and lawyers have achieved high professional status teachers have not and large have not.

It would be unwise of this time to over the connection with the universities. There is a growing rift in our universities, particularly in the shortage areas like mathematics, for instance, continuing their

studies in the universities. Universities, schools, teachers are all part of a life-cycle—there is no advantage in interfering with an ecology which seems to work well enough for the other professions. Furthermore, if educational studies and research at higher levels are to be carried on at university—and this has not seem to be questioned—it is important that initial training be included in the process. We are of course not arguing for initial training to be situated in the universities alone—in a binary education system there is everything to be said for teacher training and educational studies to be carried on in both sectors.

Universities are sometimes regarded, not without reason, as conservative institutions not easily amenable to change, yet change there has been. In the past university departments were chiefly concerned to prepare teachers for independent and grammar schools. In retrospect at least, the task was fairly straightforward.

The course was a kind of rite of passage: a term of theory and orientation to teaching; a term of practice in the sort of school already familiar to students and then a final term of rejoicing and cultural activity, the last holiday before the beginning of real life.

A few unusual students chose to go into secondary modern schools, some perhaps because promotion was rumoured to be guaranteed there—and then came the comprehensive schools. For some time we shut our eyes and pretended that nothing had happened, ploddingly numbing about equal opportunities, preserving "excellence" and just making lessons more interesting, possibly slowing down the flow of teacher talk to the less able. Slurping the university notes to pieces, to know what formats were puzled. They discovered they were despised with children not all that eager to learn and in anger they began to criticize us for not preparing them adequately.

Slowly, very slowly the university departments have responded. It has taken much time and heart-searching. We are now prepared to recognize that not all teaching takes place in homogeneous groups of pupils, that children have different learning styles, that we must pay attention to minority groups. We could do not so much to our loud and clear that the majority of teachers' clients are working class children.

Perhaps we are a kind of priesthood, not dirtying our hands with the real work but proof of its respectability.

When we acknowledge it we tend to refer to it as a problem rather than a fact. We measure differences of language, culture, relative deprivation, lack of motivation but we still have not thrown our resources into preparing students for the undernourished fact that by the end of the century the overwhelming proportion of our children will be in comprehensive schools.

Or that it seems certain that large numbers will leave school without jobs to go to.

Our efforts to relate our course more closely to the needs of the schools have not met with the approval of all our university colleagues. There is a deep-seated suspicion in the universities generally of vocational training on either men, doctors, engineers have been going on in schools and in response to new demands. This is not a question of old-boy networks.



schools—as the largely hostile reaction to proposals for N and F curriculum and examinations for the new sixth forms demonstrates—and some tend to regard practical concerns with classroom matters as not quite proper for academics.

However, there are reasons why universities may wish to hold on to their initial training courses. Postgraduate students bring in substantial fees and are good for the university's standing and the hostility to teacher training is by no means universal. Part of the current unease is due to the threat of falling numbers and resources which affects most university departments. We are all looking round to see where cuts to others are being made. We certainly have an obligation to explain to our colleagues in other university departments just what we are trying to do.

Even if we were successful in justifying ourselves to the university, we would still be faced with the problem of justifying ourselves to the schools. In one respect we start with an advantage for our university status does carry weight with teachers. Perhaps we are a kind of priesthood, not dirtying our hands with the real work but proof of its respectability.

We represent a connection between the schools and the university which is valued—not necessarily for the best of reasons and as we have suggested it is not a connection which we should push too hard since it may not be backed up by the university.

Certainly in the context of initial training the links are tenuous but the postgraduate certificates is not to be seen in isolation. Increasingly we have all come to realize that it is not sufficient that teachers need to continue with their professional training through in-service courses, diploma and further degrees—it is equally with us. We do our work well and students enjoy their first taste of educational study, establishing with us a relationship of trust. They may be disappointed to see their professional training as a continuous process and return to the university for further study.

we can't do many favours—but as university department tutors we are known and our words carry some weight. If we support a job application for instance this will be an acceptable statement to university heads and inspectors. This sort of trust is built up over time and is of some value.

We are well aware that the utility of teachers towards us is ambivalent. We are aware of some of the comfortable working conditions and so speaker at an educational conference can get an easy round of applause by castigating teachers as failed school teachers, hopeless and impractical and out of touch. The reality is different. Our work takes us into many different schools, many different classrooms, we would have to be deaf and blind not to have a very good sense of what was going on and what changes have come about in the last decade or so. Indeed for some of these changes—more humane teacher/pupil relationships, greater flexibility in class grouping, livelier syllabuses and teaching methods—we would claim to be partly responsible. With advisors, radical educational publications, the general climate of opinion, but we have played our part by encouraging experiment by supporting students and engaging in dialogue with practicing teachers. We know that innovation in education can only play a small part in initial training and even professional evaluators (the latest addition to educational paradigms) would have a hard job pin-pointing our exact contribution to success or failure in the training of teachers. Yet we see no cause to be apologetic about the part we have played and are playing.

We know that despite all we say, and the influence of schools on their first posts is much greater than ours—at any rate for the first year or two.

The "socialization" of the young teacher into the ways of the school by heads, deputy heads, heads of department, the huge influence of the "well documented" index is powerful. This is a situation that is essential there be some counterbalance in the teacher training process. It is not that we can provide fairly right or wrong but a range of alternatives to what at present is a somewhat ossified and unimaginative approach to the profession.

Where the university departments are well established, relationships made during the PGCE course can end through in-service courses. There are few secondary schools where a fair complaint of our former students, many of them in responsible positions. We have by now formed a web of relationships which enables us to keep abreast of new demands. This is not a question of old-boy networks.

It is not that we can provide fairly right or wrong but a range of alternatives to what at present is a somewhat ossified and unimaginative approach to the profession. It is essential there be some counterbalance in the teacher training process. It is not that we can provide fairly right or wrong but a range of alternatives to what at present is a somewhat ossified and unimaginative approach to the profession.

centre of innovation and good practice can quickly become routine when crucial staff leave. Another powerful argument for the preservation of training in the university is that we do have a measure of independence and academic freedom.

Clearly, without schools we have no purpose but they are in control of us through their influence, they do not dictate our attitudes. In theory schools are non-political. Is that why political councillors are so in demand by the schools?

In fact they are an expression of the political stance of the community or at any rate of the powerful part of it. Universities have a measure of independence. Immediate political control is of immense importance. We know personally (having been banned from local schools for years following the publication of *Young Teachers and Schools*) how this relative independence can be eroded, but the independence exists and is a widely valued to make the point.

In theory at any rate we are in a position to offer independent criticism of the national system and to work to provide viable alternatives. There are existing shortcomings.

Initial training demands a partnership between ourselves and schools, a partnership on a par with the identity of interest in the nature of things schools. We need to share the view of educational practices which will prepare young teachers to fit smoothly in the life and work of the school. It is, often in the very process of existing within schools, that we learn the view of ourselves. Our part is certainly to assist the young teacher to fit with actual situations but it is some time to foster a lively criticism (including self-criticism) and an interest in the possibility of alternatives. We do not share the view of schools, we hold one of our own. The new for new ideas is past. Conversation is the name of the game now.

Each week, during the 20 weeks that the course runs, students are asked to read a set of notes on the core subject. The Making of Modern Britain, and to write short answers to three or four selected questions. Once a month or so, they'll be expected to write an essay, perhaps about the outcome of the General Strike or the achievements of the 1945-51 Labour Government.

Many do more than that, contributing poems and short stories to the weekly session of the writers' workshop, or interviewing friends or relatives for the history workshop. And because of the educational relevance of this kind of work, there are some students prepared to give up a day's pay a week, or use up their holidays, in order to keep going.

What do they get out of it? A certificate, certainly not. The almost unanimous response from students would be "confidence" and a "new view of things". The time spent ourselves are to develop local self-reliance and to develop a sense of self-worth and to express themselves with confidence.

The emphasis is on students finding out for themselves and working out their ideas together. These are things that we try to encourage in the school and instead try to relate them to the central concern of the course, which is the study of Merseyside's present difficulties.

The course begins with a six-week introduction, Merseyside. Today, the scene through the study of a handful of stereotypical texts: Tony Lane's bleak, City of Dreadful Night, a series of extracts from the Liverpool CDP report and analyses of census data. As students work their way through the accompanying exercises, they learn the rudiments of study, summarizing, interpreting a graph and using a map.

At the end of the course, we return to the current state of Merseyside, equipped by now with the insights gained from 14 weeks of study and economic development. The Making of Modern Britain (The Making of Modern Britain) is a book that takes up some of the problems of the region and tries to deal with them in a way that is both relevant and practical.

It will bring academics and teachers into the classroom to talk about the prospects for small business and co-operatives and how they can be used to improve the lives of the people. The course is a partnership between the university and the schools.

When a second chance is a fine thing

by Elizabeth Filkin and Martin Yarnit

The most stringent entrance qualification for Second Chance to Learn, a social studies course for working class adults run by Liverpool University's Institute of Extension Studies and the WEA, is to have no qualifications; to have ceased formal education at the minimum school-leaving age. The other requirement is a keen and possibly active interest in the state of Merseyside.

Given together, these two policies make Second Chance a student body wholly untypical of adult education. Over the four years that the course has run, around three-quarters of the intake have been drawn from unskilled and semi-skilled manual working class backgrounds: more or less the reverse of the position in the Institute of Extension Studies.

This January's intake includes among its 40-odd members, 18 men and women describing themselves as unemployed, housewife or retired; 16 men and women employed in unskilled or semi-skilled, mainly industrial occupations. The remainder are skilled workers, community workers and white collar employees.

This does not, of course, amount to a representative cross-section of the local working class, but it does at least ensure a weighty presence of the kinds of people whose educational needs are most acute.

This is especially significant considering the demands that Second Chance makes on its students. After a full day studying and debating local history, economic policy and taking part in a writers' workshop, there is then next week's work to prepare.

Each week, during the 20 weeks that the course runs, students are asked to read a set of notes on the core subject. The Making of Modern Britain, and to write short answers to three or four selected questions. Once a month or so, they'll be expected to write an essay, perhaps about the outcome of the General Strike or the achievements of the 1945-51 Labour Government.

Many do more than that, contributing poems and short stories to the weekly session of the writers' workshop, or interviewing friends or relatives for the history workshop. And because of the educational relevance of this kind of work, there are some students prepared to give up a day's pay a week, or use up their holidays, in order to keep going.

What do they get out of it? A certificate, certainly not. The almost unanimous response from students would be "confidence" and a "new view of things". The time spent ourselves are to develop local self-reliance and to develop a sense of self-worth and to express themselves with confidence.

The emphasis is on students finding out for themselves and working out their ideas together. These are things that we try to encourage in the school and instead try to relate them to the central concern of the course, which is the study of Merseyside's present difficulties.

The course begins with a six-week introduction, Merseyside. Today, the scene through the study of a handful of stereotypical texts: Tony Lane's bleak, City of Dreadful Night, a series of extracts from the Liverpool CDP report and analyses of census data. As students work their way through the accompanying exercises, they learn the rudiments of study, summarizing, interpreting a graph and using a map.

At the end of the course, we return to the current state of Merseyside, equipped by now with the insights gained from 14 weeks of study and economic development. The Making of Modern Britain (The Making of Modern Britain) is a book that takes up some of the problems of the region and tries to deal with them in a way that is both relevant and practical.

It will bring academics and teachers into the classroom to talk about the prospects for small business and co-operatives and how they can be used to improve the lives of the people. The course is a partnership between the university and the schools.



Merseyside: best qualification is none

It is partly on this basis that we are financed by Liverpool Inner Areas Partnership Committee.

Involving local people is both a necessary means to the realization of our aims and an end in its own right," argued the Labour Government's White Paper, Policy for the Inner City, the document in which the Partnership experiment was proposed.

Regarding the students' perceptions, it is clear that Second Chance's most palpable impact is less as an activator in a narrowly political sense, than as an awakener in a sense long familiar to liberal adult education. We do not share the view of schools, we hold one of our own. The new for new ideas is past. Conversation is the name of the game now.

Ken Worpole makes a similar point about the experience of the writers' workshop movement. In his anthology of the Worker Writers Federation, To Discover a mode of expression and means you never suspected can work, a radical change in the way you see yourself and your relationship with the world. For women, tied to the limited roles of mother and housewife, the consequences of the change can be explosive.

Students decide to put their newly found assets to work for them and since this is Merseyside where redundancies are more common than job vacancies, they apply for a full-time degree course or for the Northern College (where, senior tutor Keith Jackson, was one of the founders of Second Chance). With adequate preparation, most of our pupils, unlike most, are capable of following a degree course, and many students are attracted by full-time education, partly because it is just about the only way of being paid to study.

But a three-year degree course is not suitable for everyone and many students would wish for a wider range of genuine educational options to choose from at the end of Second Chance. As it is, discretionary grants are becoming rare and fees are rising. If, for instance, you are unemployed and manage to enrol for an interesting and relevant course, you run the risk of being cut off by the end of the year. It is not a situation that is easily improved.

If, as we have argued, there is a committed and growing minority of working class adults who would like to return to education, then the question of how to overcome the present obstacles is central.

First there has to be an expansion of schemes providing an initial access to education. In particular, there must be a commitment to the needs of women, blacks and young people, those who get the worst deal at present. In Liverpool, as in many other cities, there is a

growing body of tried and tested educational practice covering all these sectors. It can be built on, but it won't be cheap.

It is a false economy to pile 20 or 30 mature students into an O level class and expect them to succeed as if they had never suffered an educational setback. Working-class adult education is expensive precisely because it is compelled to offset the damage inflicted by inadequate schooling.

An expansion of access opportunities will be meaningless, though, without a parallel growth of support facilities. We've been talking for years in this country about paid educational leave and we are still no closer to the goal. Italy's national PBT scheme, the 150 hours, demonstrates that tens of thousands of workers are serious about learning, provided they don't have to lose wages to attend a course or be expected to work in a school after a hard day's work. And why should they? The middle class has long taken for granted paid release for refresher and promotion courses.

Similarly, there has to be money for bus fares, books and child care. Single parents, and women with young families, are almost automatically excluded from education unless they can get their children looked after properly. For many of our students, especially the women and the unemployed, coming to Second Chance can mean a large choice between eating and study.

And for those who do choose to continue to full-time education, it is clear that the present arrangements are almost entirely inadequate. Educational advice units need a large injection of cash if they are to be able to be accessible to working class communities. For those who opt for mature entrance to the university or the poly, there needs to be the kind of close educational and personal support that the weekly Second Chance tutorial can provide.

Support for these kinds of ideas has helped to bring together a growing number of bodies concerned with working class adult education in Liverpool to form the Inner Areas Adult Education Consortium. Initially established to make a common application for Partnership funds, the consortium has widened its concerns to mount a campaign against all the obstacles which discourage so many would-be students from working class backgrounds.

The problem is, as always, that the pioneering, innovative work represented in the consortium is scarcely rewarded by the state. Success is more often rewarded by extinction than by expansion. Second Chance's funding runs out in March, 1982. Judging by the history of educational experimentation in Liverpool in the 1970s, that could well be the last that anyone hears of us.

Martin Yarnit is coordinator of Second Chance to Learn and WEA tutor organizer. Elizabeth Filkin is a lecturer in social studies at the Institute of Extension Studies.

Hatfield: lift-off for women

by Ruth Michaels

The 1970s have been the years of take off for continuing education. In spite of the current threat of depleted educational resources and the myopic reaction of local authorities to increased fees I believe the momentum is such that it cannot be reversed.

On one point, the three major factors which have influenced the movement. The first is structural and this is reflected in the acknowledgement by both developed and developing societies that the cumulative nature of technological change and accompanying structural changes will demand flexible and mobile labour forces.

Choosing a career can no longer be regarded as a once-and-for-all-time decision. The number of choices and the frequency at which they may have to be made is increasing and many societies are currently concerned with strategies to provide retraining and new educational opportunities to offset the redundancy due to structural changes in industry and the demand for new skills.

It is generally accepted that some form of continuing or permanent education is indispensable in societies where social and economic changes call for continuing social and occupational adjustment by individuals.

Secondly, there is the ideological component. The idea that "everyone has a need for and a right to education which should be available at any time throughout his or her life" is gaining currency. There is an understandable movement to redress the balance and reduce the gap between the educational opportunities now available to young people and those expected by older generations. Post-school education can no longer be seen as a luxury or a privilege, but as a necessity for a qualified person to enter the workforce and to continue to learn throughout his or her life.

Thirdly, there is the very real and immediate impact on educational provision by a decline in the birthrate in many developed societies. The DES outlined the implications of this demographic change in its recent paper *Higher Education in the 1990s* and the ensuing public discussion has emphasized the need to increase the numbers of mature students entering higher education. It is a competition for the anticipated decline in young entrants.

Obviously these three factors—structural, ideological and demographic—are particularly relevant to any discussion of the participation of women in continuing education. Structural change and its implications for inbuilt unemployment will seriously affect the female labour market.

Women in industry are most heavily represented in unskilled work and their preponderance in the clerical, administrative and retail distribution sectors makes them particularly vulnerable to a decrease in demand in these areas. Similarly, qualified women traditionally look for work in education, health and social services, all areas most under pressure to contract. Their need to retrain and change alternative careers is obvious.

Ideologically the "right" to education throughout life has particular significance for women who have been a minority within the minority receiving further or higher education.

It is the participation of women in part-time higher education and indeed in non-advanced further education that has materially affected the adult student population. Although the number of adults taking evening courses has declined overall to the last 10 years the number of women has continued to rise and by 1976 they outnumbered men. Further, the number of women taking other part-time day courses has increased to

the extent that they now outnumber men by three to one. It is essential to the success of any outreach programme that it should relate to the needs and characteristics of an identified group of non-traditional students. One must carefully on excess when one is seeking to help women return to education.

One can present an ideal type for women returners. Typically they will have had little or no experience of higher education and a restricted experience of any post-school training. Most of them will have worked in one of the three major areas of female employment, clerical, retail or the service industries—work which ceased with the birth of their first child.

They will have had six or more years at home with their children and while wishing to return to the labour market (six million married women now work) they will be unsure how best to do so, particularly if they do not wish to return to a job similar to the one they previously held. Even if they do want to return to their former occupation, they will need refresher or updating courses. They lack confidence and they lack information.

For the past 10 years we have been designing courses at the polytechnic with the needs of this group in mind. In 1971 we developed the New Opportunities for Women short course which has now been emulated widely in the United Kingdom and overseas.

We hope to increase their understanding of the occupational structure and future trends and make them aware of the opportunities that exist for re-entry to education, training and employment. We aim to widen their horizons beyond the traditional fields of female employment by providing speakers from 20 or more occupations. They are encouraged to consider long-term goals and the routes to achieve them.

The course runs one day a week for 10 weeks from 10 am to 3 pm. Aside from lectures and guest speakers and discussion groups, the course includes a visit to a factory to take a battery of interest and ability tests and to make part in simulated interviews.

The NOW course has also had its unintended consequences, the most rewarding being the fact that students passing on the knowledge of the occupational structure and career possibilities to their children, particularly their daughters.

The NOW students have been the subject of a survey since 1971 and the desire of women to continue their education was apparent. Over 80 per cent of the students indicated they wanted to continue provided they could attend courses locally during the hours their children were at school.

As a consequence we now offer preparatory courses and a degree scheme with the same part-time day attendance. The preparatory courses are designed to familiarize students with the four main components of study, lectures, seminars, reading and essay writing. Students attend two days a week for an initial eight weeks and have courses in study methods, literature, human sciences and numeracy.

Students attend two days a week for an initial eight weeks and have courses in study methods, literature, human sciences and numeracy. Numeracy was at first a choice component but the women opting for it gained so much from finding they could cope we now include it as a compulsory course and it is going some way to breaking down the myth many women hold that they cannot cope with mathematics.

Recently at the students' request we have extended Polyprep to include a second eight-week course when students concentrate on two subjects. Those who achieve a satisfactory standard in both courses are eligible for a Polytechnic Certificate of Preparatory Studies. The course is not presented as an alternative to A levels, but as an important step towards the potential of students for their own benefit and as an indicator of their readiness to return.

Obviously some degree courses or professional training will continue to demand a specific preparation and students should be made aware of this. Our experience of offering these generalized preparatory courses shows that they are beneficial even for students who gained A levels at school or who have had some previous experience of higher education.

continued on page 12

Announcements

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closure

The Reading Rooms of the National Library of Scotland (with the exception of the Music Reading Room and the Map Room) will be closed to the public from 5 pm on 21 March to 9.30 am on 31 March 1980 for essential redecoration.

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Union view

Charting the
right course
for polys

It is perhaps odd that, among the many views expressed on the question of polytechnic charters, one of the strongest should come from the *Financial Times*. In paragraph 452 of *Engineering, Our Future* we find, in italics, at the end of a strong line of argument, the conclusion:

"We consider there to be an urgent need to re-examine the management of engineering education in polytechnics. This may require that their governing bodies are given greater authority to manage their activities within approved budgets."

It would seem logical that such "greater authority" could only come from the establishment of a charter within which a polytechnic operated. It seems equally logical that the opinion of such an impartial and thorough inquiry should be given appropriate weight.

Three main reasons stand out for believing that the granting of charters is an essential step in the development of polytechnics. The first is the sense of "corporate being" which would be engendered. The Court of Governors would cease to be merely a figure-head or a buffer between polytechnic and local authority. It would have genuine power and the responsibility to go with it.

The second reason is the need for greater, and faster, responsiveness as discussed by Finiston while the third lies in the role of polytechnics as degree awarding bodies.

At present, polytechnics "award" CNAAs. However, it is becoming widely accepted that the awarding of charters to the end of its useful life, although for entirely obvious reasons, the controlling function of CNAAs cannot "withstand" in the absence of polytechnic charters. It is worth digressing to look at the present system.

Currently, the ideas for a degree scheme are produced from a particular area or department within a polytechnic. In detail they include all matters from enrolment to graduation. They will probably be subject to internal validating procedures. After much discussion and some hazard, the CNAAs may validate the scheme.

Students successfully completing the course receive a certificate in the form of a qualification called a CNAAs degree. Their having studied at a particular polytechnic appears almost incidental. An impression is given that polytechnic degrees are different from, and therefore inferior to, those of universities.

Calling the award a CNAAs degree renders the qualification almost incomprehensible to many people outside the polytechnic system. The concept of a degree awarded by an organization that neither teaches nor examines is not easily understood, especially abroad; nor is the concept of the council itself, since it has no analogue in any comparable sphere of activity.

It is clear that some clarification is needed; people are now accustomed to having polytechnics and universities referred to in the same breath and find it odd that they do not bear also of university and polytechnic degrees.

CNAAs itself has acknowledged the need for change. In July 1975, the discussion paper *Partnership in Validation* was issued in which a greater degree of participation by the various institutions was envisaged.

There were criticisms of this document, and the ensuing discussions culminated in the publication last year of a new paper—*Development in Partnership in Validation*—which acknowledged the experi-

failures of our entire educational

system. And failures that cost £100m a time—a third of the entire university research budget—come expensive.

There are many reasons for delays and increased cost in the construction industry. But one of the important contributing factors that is being mentioned increasingly is the poor calibre of the people who go into engineering management.

One reason is probably the comparatively low pay. But the other reason—harder to overcome—is the poor image which engineering has in the schools, the inability of so many universities to excite the interest of the best students in industry-related disciplines, and the no well-bred British belief that the steel piping and the mud of a building site is strictly for second class minds.

The diehards may argue that this is just another attempt to extol the value of industry beyond the bounds of reason and the best interests of the universities. It is not; nor is it meant to imply that there is no merit in the pursuit of scholarship for its own sake. But even the most long-necked ostriches have to recognize that the present balance in favour of arts and social science courses must be reversed.

The prosperity enjoyed by institutions of higher education—and by the nation as a whole—depends on our ability to improve the present wretched performance of British industry. It is as simple as that.

But will industry cooperate with the academic world if the latter starts making a real effort to meet its needs? Schools generally seem to be more willing—though there are exceptions—so link up with industry than industry is to establish contact with them. In higher education, so claim many business-men, cooperating with institutions is a triumph of hope over experience.

We must face the fact that good liaison will not just happen. A catalyst is needed to convince both sides that it is in their mutual advantage. Since the local dimension is fundamental it ought to be—for want of a better mechanism—the responsibility of some part of the MSC. The education unit in the Department of Industry might apply for a grant to develop a guide for employers on effective and

creative methods of liaising with education on a wide range of fronts, from school contacts to sandwich placements.

But at the same time we need to put a new national impetus behind training, in the broadest sense. I believe our failure to do this so far is related to the nature of the MSC. It has too many "welfare" chains on its resources which distract it from what should be its overriding responsibility—training.

For example, the TOFS scheme offers enormous potential for the pursuit of recurrent education, but its value as a source of funds for those needing to broaden or improve their skills is lost because only the unemployed are eligible.

A National Training Board would be a far better instrument, providing it had clout as a result of controlling its own funds. Such a board could determine national training objectives and finance specific developments such as computer education and the much neglected technical level courses. The Special Measures Programme, or MSC, demonstrated the success of making funds available centrally for such initiatives.

A National Training Board might also manage to snap us out of the creeping confusion currently bedevilling opportunities for young people. Far too much of the 16 to 19 debate is couched in terms of mopping up those who will not be stepping on to the higher education ladder.

In the past the main emphasis was on the apprenticeship system, but there has been a catastrophic decline in its apprenticeship places. The truth is that we can no longer rely on vocational skills being provided by industry itself. And we face a dual dilemma: thousands of vacancies in the midst of unemployment because there are not the skilled people available, and a rapid decline in the number and range of unskilled and semi-skilled jobs.

Without the firm guidance that a board could give, we face a grave danger during the present rearmament of public spending: the several departments and bodies involved in training separately, cutting their budgets with a disproportionately great and indiscriminate cut in effective training. The Department of Industry might apply for a grant to develop a guide for employers on effective and

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Don's diary

Saturday

Most of the day is spent tentatively poking the various mechanical aids to our new life. We do actually have to work around the house, but otherwise the cause of the energy crisis manifests itself everywhere. We become very circumspect about pushing anything which looks halfway like a button.

Off for a spin in our secondhand V8 gas-guzzler, scoring myself half to death the first time I breathe on the power brakes, and this assembled company three-quarters to death the first time I take a corner.

Our eight-week-old son remains calm; if very wide-eyed, throughout an expedition which consists mainly of a visit to the local shopping mall. Here we go mad, and fill our huge station wagon with liquid barbecue smoke, six-packs of Lono Star beer and other interesting and invaluable accessories to Texan family life. We adjust instantly to the higher standard of living which balances the simple equation: more money—lower prices.

Sunday

It's 8 am, and time for the country music religious shows, which are absolutely spellbinding. We resolve to get up at 8 am every Sunday, even when the effect of changing time zones wears off, and resist temptations to come closer to God, stand by his TV. Later, amid reports of kitchen fires, and stalled cars in downtown Austin, we learn that the Iranian crisis is a Communist plot.

Monday

The first day of term, but I have no teaching until tomorrow. Most of the day is spent trying to find out how I should organize my classes, assess my students, and generally run my academic life. My new colleagues tell me to do what I want. I doubt that they really mean it, but I do what I want. I do it, and decide to do whatever I want. There will be no final exams, no tests and no computer-marked multiple-choice exercises, just coursework papers.

A chance to put my ideas into practice and I feel they don't fall for it. At least, since I am entitled to a graduate student to grade my papers, I need not sully my hands with any marking, and cannot break too much havoc.

Students phone all day, and seem to expect me to tell them my course; I do my best. It is January 14, and 80 degrees outside. Most students wear shorts and look happy enough, while I try to imagine what Austin is like in summer.

Tuesday

The great moment! My first class starts at 9 am with a loud bell and every student in place, pen poised. Since this course involves playing games, and since this class is five times bigger than any I've played with before, I am a little apprehensive. The problem is compounded by the fact that Texan students are considerably more assertive and belligerent than their Liverpool counterparts.

They seem to flourish in the atmosphere of imminent chaos. Several come up to me afterwards to congratulate me; I find this both presumptuous, and irresistibly flattering. Those who have hated it start off to fill out their "drop" cards.

Wednesday

Most of the day is spent trying to sort out problems with the co-re readings. I was very surprised to

find that the bookshop had lost my order, but was astonished to discover that this was regarded as a major disaster by the students.

They look blankly at me when I assure them that everything is on reserve at the library; library books are obviously no good.

A commercial copying service comes to my rescue. I deposit course materials with them; they sell copies to the boys and girls. Everyone is happy making and spending money, particularly the students who, having paid for my stuff, immediately consider it valuable. It is 52 degrees outside. Everyone appears in several scarves and moans about the weather. I regard the weather map nervously, since it announces that the temperature is 5°F in other parts of Texas.

Thursday

My second burst of teaching reassures me that there is going to be absolutely no problem in filling up the time. The students display an unbelievably wide range of ability and knowledge. Some seem to know nothing about anything, asking questions which set me back on my heels. While I am still reeling, others pitch in with something really sophisticated. They ask questions, listen carefully and take a lot of interest. Why should not they? They can drop my courses tomorrow if they get fed up.

One thing they do not like are my reading lists. They complain about the expense of buying all the books, and the time needed to read them. I explain about the book-buying habits of British students, and the consequent nature of British reading lists. Even the apparently bright ones do not understand this, and I will have to try again next week, before they are all bankrupt.

This evening we hit the town, courtesy of Beth, our all-American, gum-chewing, High School baby-sitter, and the Whiskey River Saloon, pay a three dollar cover, drink ice cold beer in cans, and watch the live country music, feeling pretty English. I try to imagine what I would look like in a cowboy hat, but decide that everyone would laugh at me when I got back to Liverpool.

Friday

I pass my first examination in Texas! I am now the proud owner of a Texas driving licence. Actually, let me take some of those exclamation marks back, there was no driving test, since I had a British licence, just a multiple choice examination. School buses figure so prominently in this as they do in every newscast found in every advertisement for a new housing development just outside the city limits, where you can live life just like it was in the good old days.

"White flight" has yet to gather sufficient momentum that they raise the speed limits on commuter roads; as long as I remember this, my licence is safe. The advantage of a Texas licence is that I can do grown-up things like cash cheques. The disadvantage is that they have my thumbprints.

My colleagues buzz around doing their departmental chores. For a visitor, have none, and sit in the sun, drinking beer and watching the student scroll by in their efforts, glibly by on their roller skates, and cruise by in their coverdribs. They all seem pretty mellow and I must admit, I am beginning to feel pretty mellow too.

Michael Lavel

The author is taking leave from the University of Liverpool and starting a visiting appointment in the Government Department of the University of Texas, Austin.

Failures that
Britain cannot
afford

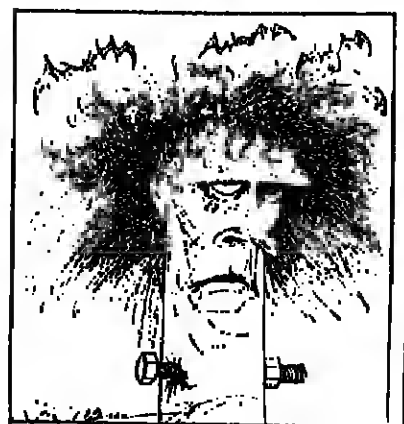
Keith Hampson

ICI and BP Chemicals have just opened a huge ethylene plant at Teesside. The plant was no longer late being completed and cost £200m instead of the £100m the companies had planned. But ICI and BP Chemicals were not off lightly. The ICI is waiting for no fewer than eight power stations to be built nearby all of them are taking years to build than anyone expects. Don at Dungeness, is going to be ten years late in starting up.

ICI is expected for delays and in-creased costs in establishing major production plants; is unbearable. European companies may be truly that, but it is undermining the British economy and helping to attract foreign investors build in the UK.

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Laurie Taylor



"So far then everyone agrees that question three on the sociolinguistic theory paper 1 should read: Q3. Full stop. Open double inverted commas. The Whorfian Hypothesis... with capitals for Whorfian and Hypothesis. Right? ... Good. The Whorfian Hypothesis is a rather less than the linguistic theorising of Whorf himself than it does to the desire of commentators to construct a pseudo-scientific theory. Full stop. Close double inverted commas. Discuss with reference to other conceptual scapegoats in linguistic theory. Full stop. New any further comments before we move on to question four?"

"Well, Gordon, I don't want to be pedantic. It is this an actual question? That first bit, 'I mean you're putting it in quotes as though someone has said it, whereas I thought that last year we'd agreed to the general rule that the only question marks to be placed in question marks were to be placed in question marks by someone other than the course tutor or his personal friends.'"

"Thank you Doctor Rabbit. You do usefully remind us of previous decisions in this area. Unfortunately though, your memory is fallible, the voting on question marks last year was tied eight all and I refrained from using my casting vote. You are perhaps thinking of the majority decision which was reached over the use of the initial capital letters for words which support his or her. Jan. That, as I recall, resulted in a very solid 12 to four in favour of capitalisation for Jan but not for John. We have Whorfian, Leontina but not John. A rather surprising decision. Still, yes, Quintus, I think it is redundant here."

"While we're thinking about quotation marks, sir, I wonder if I could draw the attention of the examiners' committee to two clumsy phrases in the present wording. Firstly the construction 'rather less than it does to x' rather than 'less than x'. Surely either is redundant here."

"And while I don't want to drag things out, if you agree with me that rather should go, then might we not correct the infelicitous phrase 'but not John' in the second sentence. By any standard, the word 'but' should read to 'such either'."

"Mr. Chairman, I really do violently object to Dr. Quintus's attempt to fold upon the rest of us his own extraordinary obsession with correct usage, language moves, language changes. It seems to me a dialectical relationship to that which it represents, that is its essence. Dr. Quintus's intervention, if I may say so, is dangerously reminiscent of the way in which he attempted to influence the vote in our 1975 debate on whether a colon or semicolon is appropriate immediately after the formulation 'Write brief notes on any of the following'. Surely we can make some progress in those matters of choice we seem to be moving backwards."

Gentlemen, gentlemen, I don't think any effort to revive the complex ideological semantics of times stress arguments rather than (if you excuse the phrase Dr. Quintus) rather than our differences. There was, for example, an historic agreement to limit the use of the infinitive to three in the entire paper, and the unanimous 1976 vote totally outlawing 'in what way?' and 'do you agree?' and finally last year's majority decision to allow the setter to have the casting vote whenever the issue of the total incomprehensibility of a question was raised. Surely no-one who dwells on such a range of advances could possibly suggest that this examiners' board had failed to make significant progress in the last decade..."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Financial restraints and the AUT

Sir—You are no doubt aware that at the December meeting the Council of the Association of University Teachers called on the membership to "support a national campaign against educational cuts and in particular at national level with other unions in campaigns against public expenditure cuts."

It also asked the executive to organize a national day of protest with other university unions on all aspects of Government cuts in university expenditure.

I learned only on February 5 from a branch notice, that these resolutions are new to be acted upon.

While, of course, cuts have been discussed at local branch meetings, I have certainly not been aware that this was a prelude to taking such matters before Council. Nor do I recall having been invited to inform a delegate to Council how I would wish him to vote upon such matters. But that may be explained by my own inactivity.

One thing is certain, however. There has been no attempt by the AUT to ascertain by ballot whether or not a majority, let alone a substantial majority of AUT members wished to be associated with the actions and attitudes implied in the above resolutions. In view of the dimensions of the issue—a direct challenge to the Government to reverse a policy declared in the manifesto upon which it was elected—this seems to me to be deplorable.

I voted to put this Government into office. I did so in full awareness of the consequences.

Mr. Moody's review would seem to be a rather odd mixture of the ill-tempered assault on my book, *A Light from Eleusis* in *THE*, February 1979.

Mr. Moody's assertion that my account of Eleusis is "a muddle of false distinctions, misrepresentations and misconceptions" is not only false, it is itself a misrepresentation of the contents of my book. Mr. Moody does not support his assertions except to quarrel with what he claims is my interpretation of canto 81. I devote fewer than three of the 267 pages of my text to a discussion of canto 81, and, in any case, do not read it in the way he pretends I do. Mr. Moody is perhaps unaware that I was the first scholar to point out the importance of Eleusis in the *Cantos* (*Pride and Prejudice*, 1974). One theme of my book is the further elaboration of that motif in Pound's poem.

I will not bore you with a point by point rebuttal of his own confident reading of the nature and meaning of the Greater Mysteries of Eleusis, but will content myself with pointing out that no infidel to ever revealed the nature or meaning of the Sacred Rites. I am a long way from knowing how Mr. Moody has discovered so much about the Eleusinian rites when scholars and archaeologists have devoted years of research to the subject without learning as much.

I know nothing of Mr. Moody and have never read any publication of his dealing with the *Cantos*, and therefore can only speculate as to the motive for his incoherent attack. There may be a clue in his concluding remark where he complains that I am "so sure that it is Pound who has got it all wrong." In itself, it is a wickedly dishonest remark since I do not of course know that it is Pound, who has got it all wrong. It is, however, "it?" might be a more appropriate remark.

Working-class students

Sir—In your report last week of the meeting between the DES and the VC's, it is stated that "the chairmen were reluctant to buy the proposition of working-class students' and that the DES judgment based on application to provide a safe class would be to two dangerous groups."

This statement implies that the DES should be on the basis of past practice rather than future promise, that the two are the same, and they are not. It is well-known in agreement with common sense that a given level of performance is not a guarantee of future performance. It is likely to do less well than those who had been in the past.

One of the now accepted facts of life is that the DES should be on the basis of past practice rather than future promise, that the two are the same, and they are not. It is well-known in agreement with common sense that a given level of performance is not a guarantee of future performance. It is likely to do less well than those who had been in the past.

I urge all colleagues who regard the policy of cuts in public expenditure as reasonable and necessary, and who occur to plead for exemption from discrimination that ought to be borne patiently for the national good, to make their views known; and thus to correct in some measure the damage done by Council's somewhat ill-considered initiative.

Yours faithfully,
DR MERVYN HUSKETT,
"Cherry Hay",
Wrotham Road,
Moulton,
Kent.

Radical Right
Sir—I refer to Arthur Seldon's article "Radical Right versus Conservative Left."

In the article Mr. Seldon repeatedly argues this case for "radical right" thinkers to be given more air play within academic institutions. However, he goes on to state that this case is based on a false intention, which appears to be to replace the present "conservative left" state-run higher education system by one which is privately funded.

One less redbrick would be no tragedy. One strong Buckingham would be a beacon of independence from politics in British education. The fact that such a move would deny many people this opportunity to receive an advanced education does not seem to concern the author; this being nothing more than "compassion fatigue". More to the point, Buckingham, an misleading and dishonest in two respects.

Pirately, the CNA has consistently refused to accredit the "degrees" awarded by UC Buckingham because they are not of an adequate standard. Secondly, notwithstanding this, the present Government is planning to grant UC Buckingham a charter.

It is apparent that the radical right which prevails within the Government is prepared to sacrifice long-term educational standards for short-term political capital. Such a move must be vigorously opposed by all of us who wish to maintain the high standard of education and the right of people to benefit from it.

Blunt and Sakharov

Sir—Would it now be appropriate for the convocation of London University, which met in April 1979, to decide against stripping the title of emeritus professor from Anthony Blunt (February 1979), or to decide for another relevant occasion? Notably, to debate (and to decide) the awarding of an honorary doctorate to Andrei Sakharov, who has been stripped of all his honours and titles, and sent into internal exile by a tyrannical regime which Professor Blunt thought it right to praise and to promote.

Yours faithfully,
STANLEY LINDSON,
7 Highfield Avenue,
Cambridge.

Linking Chomsky's ideas
Sir—David Lightfoot (February 1979) is disingenuous in denying Chomsky uses his linguistic ideas to buttress his radical politics. My *Liberty and Language* is a response to Chomsky's *Reflections on Language*, which constitutes an attempt to just the kind of refusal to recognize, in my view, a "radical" to Chomsky's chapter on one-sidedness, namely about the right of linguistics to political ideas.

Chomsky's readers take note: this was what, since the chapter was written, he has been able to do in his career—can be cited to straw man. It is also true that Chomsky has since backed out of this question of linking language and politics. He is now a "vocalist" but, it is true, a vocalist.

In any case, the interesting point is not whether Chomsky's links between his ideas and his politics are correct, but whether they exist, and whether they are, in the answer, in Chomsky's own words, "a radical" to Chomsky's chapter on one-sidedness, namely about the right of linguistics to political ideas.

Yours faithfully,
TUDOR GRIFITHS,
2 Feilick Road,
Carmarthen,
Cardiff.

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The importance of academic detente

The United States Government, through its Department of Education, has been more vehemently than ever in the past in its support of the American scientific and academic community. This is a welcome development, particularly in view of the fact that the American scientific and academic community has been the target of a sustained campaign of harassment and persecution by the Soviet Union and its satellites.

It is not only the American scientific and academic community that has been the target of this campaign. The Soviet Union and its satellites have also been the target of a sustained campaign of harassment and persecution by the United States and its allies.

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Why we need a new Robbins

The Robbins report, which was published in 1963, was a landmark document in the history of higher education in the United Kingdom. It set out a vision of a new system of higher education, based on the principle of universality of access. It was a vision that has never been fully realized, and it is time to consider whether it is still relevant in the light of the challenges facing higher education today.

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NUS finance: need for guidelines

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Respect if not admiration for the GDR

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Steven Muller

Only recently returned from a week-long exposure to the system of higher education in the German Democratic Republic, I thought it worthwhile to report a few major impressions. A week is not long, but it is long enough to see that there is no intention to claim instant expertise. But apart from the political context—where character must be assumed to be known—and without even attempting comprehensive description, comment on some key aspects of higher education in the GDR may be of interest.

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The importance of academic detente

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